

welcome

Dear Friend,
As you may know, domestic violence crosses ethnic, racial, age, national origin, sexual orientation, religious and socioeconomic lines. By the most conservative estimate, according to the U.S. Department of Justice, one million women suffer nonfatal violence by an abuser every year.

Fortunately, there is a mail-forwarding program administered by the Secretary of State's Office called Safe at Home that helps Californians escape abusive partners. Essentially, it could be your new beginning to a brighter future and anonymity from harmful people.

Safe at Home participation has grown to more than 2,600 women, men and children since its 1999 launch. We have tremendous sympathy for the numerous individuals who have shared their vivid accounts of fear and abuse. We know that perpetrators are deceptive and cunning and that Safe at Home offers added protection from stalkers and abusers.



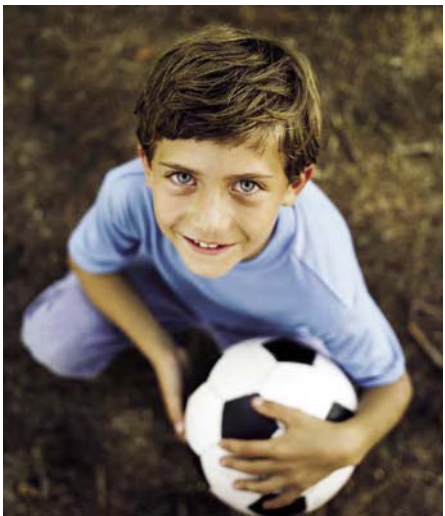
No one can sing the praises of Safe at Home better than our participants. Personal stories portray accurate appraisals of each situation. Recently, one of our participants shared the following message: "I have been a participant for a number of years following my 'near death' encounter with domestic violence at the hands of my ex-husband. Without this valuable program (Safe at Home), it would have been living hell but by following your program to the letter, I am undetected by my violent perpetrator."

We invite you to examine the program and its many features. Safe at Home may offer you added peace of mind and new options in life as you begin to rebuild your future.

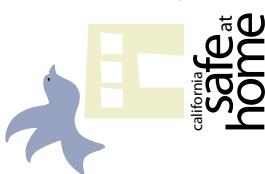
Every Californian should feel safe at home.

Sincerely,

BRUCE MCPHERSON
Secretary of State



Secretary of State | California Safe at Home
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safe at ^{california}home



“ I’d like to take this time to thank everyone affiliated with this exceptional program for the peace of mind and safety it has afforded me for the past four-plus years. I appreciate what you have done and want to say a ‘from-the-heart’ thank you! ”
— Safe at Home participant

safe at home

Since 1999, Safe at Home, the California Secretary of State’s mail forwarding program, has offered more than 2,600 women, men and children a safe mailing address for victims of stalking and domestic violence.

When you qualify for the program, a Safe at Home post office box in Sacramento becomes your new mailing address. First-class mail is packaged weekdays in strict confidence and forwarded to your confidential California home address.



WHAT we OFFER

Voter Registration
Program participants can have their voter registration information kept entirely confidential from campaigns, pollsters and the media by completing a Confidential Voter Registration Affidavit at the time of enrollment, or at the Registrar of Voters/County Clerks office. Safe at Home participants receive absentee voter status so they can vote by mail.



Name Change Confidentiality
After completing an Intent of Name Change form with Safe at Home, you can petition for your confidential name change at your county’s superior court.



Confidentiality for Children
For families meeting the criteria for Safe at Home, parents or guardians may apply for identification cards for each child needing protection from violence. All the benefits of a Safe at Home adult participant apply to children as well. Additionally, parents and guardians can notify their child’s school of the child’s participation in the program. Program guidelines that inform the school about the child’s involvement will be added to the child’s school folder, which provides another layer of protection from anyone asking for names and addresses.

Reproductive Health Care Workers and Volunteers
Reproductive health care workers and volunteers who fear for their safety also may apply to Safe at Home.

PARTICIPANT’S GUIDE

If you are interested in participating in Safe at Home, you should make an appointment with one of the 280 designated enrolling agencies — domestic violence shelters or district attorney’s offices — in California. You can find locations of enrolling agencies online at www.CaSafeAtHome.org or by calling our offices at 877.322.5227.

When you meet with an enrolling agency counselor and understand the purpose of the Safe at Home Program, the counselor will determine if you qualify and assist you in completing the application process. You will need to bring a current restraining order or police report when you meet with the enrolling agency staff or qualifying documentation for reproductive health care applicants.

When you have completed the enrollment materials, the enrolling agency will forward your application packet to Safe at Home for review. If your application is approved, you will receive a Safe at Home participant package in the mail within 15 days. The participant package contains your certification of enrollment and an official Identification Card (ID) with an address for use in business or public transactions that require a residence or mailing address. State and local agencies must accept the Safe at Home address when you present your ID card.



“ Safe at Home has given me a whole new lease on life; that I can be safe, that I’m not alone. ”

— Safe at Home participant

www.CaSafeAtHome.org



QUESTIONS & answers

Q. What is Safe at Home?

A. It is a mail-forwarding program administered by the Secretary of State’s office. If you are a survivor of domestic violence or a victim of stalking, or an employee or patient of a reproductive health care center, the program offers a substitute address to use in place of your real home address.

Q. How does the system work?

A. The process is fairly simple. Safe at Home contracts with more than 280 enrolling agencies in California. These agencies will counsel and help you complete the necessary paperwork. For up-to-date information on Safe at Home, visit us online at www.CaSafeAtHome.org or call us toll free at 877.322.5227

Q. What kind of documents do I need to start the enrollment process?

A. You will need court documents proving you are a victim of stalking or domestic abuse, such as a police report or a restraining order. Reproductive health care workers must submit employer information to qualify. Full details are on the Safe at Home web site at www.CaSafeAtHome.org

Q. What are some other advantages of enrolling in Safe at Home?

A. In addition to the confidential mail forwarding service, Safe at Home participants can enroll in optional services, which include records suppression for the California Department of Motor Vehicles and confidential voter registration and name change.

Q. Does the program forward all mail?

A. No, only first-class mail is forwarded. By law, packages, magazines and third-class mail will be returned to sender. Certified mail received is signed for by Secretary of State’s staff and then forwarded as received.

Q. Who may sign up for Safe at Home?

A. Any Californian who meets the enrollment criteria may sign up.

Q. How do I sign up?

A. Just visit the Safe at Home web site at www.CaSafeAtHome.org for a list of enrolling agencies. For more information about the program or about how to enroll, call us at 877.322.5227.

Q. When will the service begin?

A. Pending review and approval from the Safe at Home office, your mail service should be processed within 15 days.